

House Fests 2015

relics, documents, notes

jim leftwich

House Fest Nov - Dec 2015

525 10th Street

a manila envelope addressed to De Villo Sloan containing collaborative trashpo collages/concoctions made by jim leftwich and evan damerow:

-- postcard of Xu Bing's Word Play. the card came in a shoebox donated by beth deel to the collab fests 9 or 10 years ago. modified, or corrected, with packing tape, yarn, trash, and stencil frottage.

-- postcard from the same shoebox advertising rice krispies pizza. "It's Free / Mail Art" stamp from picasso gaglione. "PIE" stamp made at a house fest several years ago. "Let it Rot." "Times ticking."

-- get gaga postcard from the same shoebox, stamped with a carved eraser and splotted with bingo dye.

"don't run with scissors, don't play in traffic" postcard from the same shoebox, modified with flaky jumbo biscuits packaging, an illegible pink post-it note, and a purple bingo-dye burst. scribbling on trash.

trash taped to trash.

trash stapled to trash.

"organically grown" twist-tie bent and curved and twisted. stapled to a green scrap of paper with kid's writing on it: Phe boss 1 / Neck lace / Mom's / Eby
grocery list

seal for your protection seal

ani difranco postcard

pink ribbon

before and after networking stamp from picasso gaglione

POEM / Muir Trail North / John South

I don't remember why we didn't mail this envelope.

Eleven 8.5 x 5.5 TLPress booklets

1. Be An Iguana. Bag texts. Quasi-calligraphic scribbling. Torn and cut letteral vispo.
2. elephant. drawing, stamping, writing, collaging, coloring, taping. we would be so much better off. punk as fuck. read / enjoy.
3. fecor. worm boots. future furniture tale. scribble / glueism. tooth tooth / sea sea. mark.
4. scavenger. noxic banana redactor. gorilla radio tape. kiss the pan. fish glue. ash-butter. whale assisted manufacture. Twinkinkies. lizard knapsack.
5. Permanent Magnet. "A map with the date."
6. roge. poem nose.
7. maps from evan damerow. mailed by mistake from the pacific coast trail to 525 10ths street in roanoke. in a large box left unopened until he returned at the end of his walk. i sent him an email asking about the box when it arrived, but i sent it to an address he wasn't checking. my parmesan. abbreviations.
8. pedicel. a small stalk bearing an individual flower in an inflorescence. a small stalklike structure connecting an organ or other part to the human or animal body. part of a graft, especially a skin graft, left temporarily attached to its original site. That's not writing. B The Change.
9. Horsewhip Censorship, by Senor Chip. Radio / Active Banana Tape. Poultry Vacuum. 37 Pie Megarolls. Anti-glue. Sarx pie / Noxic Fish. Chicken mechanic. This is not a pope. Terre Redactor. Universal cow glue museum.
10. ES. "Trash that's new again."
11. atch off here! writing against itself. Full moon.

Four tips:

1. Leave No Trace. How can you hel / would + ake Hal.
2. Eggs do not contain hormones. Pass Agua Dul to Tehacha.
3. contour interval. Pass outlet in water boundary.
4. Glazed Cherry Pie. "you don't shut it down by calling the victims stupid."

from my House Fest Notes:

november - december 2015

with Evan Damerow, while he was staying here between hiking the Pacific Coast Trail and going back to New Zealand -- with Katastrof a couple of nights, bela grimm one night, and Aaron Bensen at least one night.

my textimagepoetry album for this period contains 251 photos. a citizens united against citizens united sticker. collaborative trashpo. postcard modifications. poem objects. assemblages. grocery lists with stencil rubbings. Xu Bing's calligraphic Word Play postcard. bag texts. Moon Apogee Dionysus before Krispy Kreme Doughnuts before Tantalus Sept 27 2015. Hard Tack Weevil Biscuits. carpet badgers. We will defeat them with pitiless shopping POEM. Barf Barf Barf. ttps. TLPRESS Roanoke 2015. maps of the pacific coast trail inadvertently mailed by evan to me when he intended to mail them to himself while hiking the trail, folded, stapled, cut, collaged, scribbled on and displayed as ttps. Chuck D: fuck this society. Trash That's New Again. persian cucumbers. $2 \times 3 = 6$. $2 + 3 = 5$. Send Ca\$h Family Make Your Life Risk-Free Beef Lab. Read. Enjoy. We would be so much better off. Full Moon. Bus hole train hole real name. Terre Redactor. guerrilla tape. poultry vacuum. hot dogs dipped. Sure it's not Stalin? when you walk in the dark, walk with your feet. This is not a map.

the box contains a lot of index cards with collage and handwriting. lots of cynical humor. one night i think everyone except me was stoned. i felt intensely alienated in my own workspace. group collaboration is not always open and inclusive. sometimes it is very cliquish and inexplicably elitist. (for example: all of the stoned people are on one team, on the same wavelength, and all of the not stoned people are on a different team, not dialed in.) sometimes these gatherings are almost unbearably uncomfortable. just because several people are working on the same sheet of paper does not mean they are all "on the same page". that is a good thing, in the big picture, in the long run, but it can make for some awkward interactions around a cluttered table. i do most of my work alone for a reason.

All in all the house fests over the years were a wonderful addition to our everyday lives and I wouldn't go back and change a single thing about them. Sometimes I think I should have been more assertive, and it's hard to shake that sense of having sacrificed some of the potential inherent in the various gatherings I've been a part of, but I wanted collaboration to be a kind of participatory democracy, and I wanted the experience of participatory democracy to open our individual and collective minds to the dreamed realities of anarchy.

On a visit to New York City in the early 1990s I bought a copy of Temporary Autonomous Zone, by Hakim Bey. I remember being very impressed by the following section:

"IN SLEEP WE DREAM of only two forms of government -- anarchy & monarchy. Primordial root consciousness understands no politics & never plays fair. A democratic dream? a socialist dream? Impossible.

Whether my REMs bring verdical near-prophetic visions or mere Viennese wish-fulfillment, only kings & wild people populate my night. Monads & nomads.

Pallid day (when nothing shines by its own light) slinks & insinuates & suggests that we compromise with a sad & lackluster reality. But in dream we are never ruled except by love or sorcery, which are the skills of chaotes & sultans.

Among a people who cannot create or play, but can only work, artists also know no choice but anarchy & monarchy. Like the dreamer, they must possess & do possess their own perceptions, & for this they must sacrifice the merely social to a "tyrannical Muse." Art dies when treated "fairly." It must enjoy a caveman's wildness or else have its mouth filled with gold by some prince. Bureaucrats & sales personnel poison it, professors chew it up, & philosophers spit it out. Art is a kind of byzantine barbarity fit only for nobles & heathens. If you had known the sweetness of life as a poet in the reign of some venal, corrupt, decadent, ineffective & ridiculous Pasha or Emir, some Qajar shah, some King Farouk, some Queen of Persia, you would know that this is what every anarchist must want. How they loved poems & paintings, those dead luxurious fools, how they absorbed all roses & cool breezes, tulips & lutes! Hate their cruelty & caprice, yes -- but at least they were human. The bureaucrats, however, who smear the walls of the mind with odorless filth -- so kind, so gemütlich -- who pollute the inner air with numbness -- they're not even worthy of hate. They scarcely exist outside the bloodless Ideas they serve."

I understand this much better now than I did when I first read it 25 years ago. I know why we dream of monarchy, and I also know why we must resist those inclinations.

in the box is a sealed envelope labeled Katastrof. i open it and find maybe 15 or 20 3 x 5 index cards covered in doodles, smears, smudges, and scribbles. with a few legible words scattered here and there. dated Nov 20 2015.

i set the envelope aside and pick up the 4 x 6 index card on top of the pile in the box. i begin to read it. top left is written the word "noxic". top center to right is an image of a fish head emerging from a globe. a scrap of a trail map is taped onto the center of the card. to its lower right is affixed a circular image with an acorn in the center, with the words "helping people" above it and "prepare" below it. bottom left is written in light blue crayon the word "petulant". beside it is a scrap of trash with the following text:

3.5 - 4.25 Oz - Select Varieties
Beech-Nut Just Baby
Food or Pouches

i flip the card over to see if there are any names or initials on the back. there are none. but, i notice that the word "Fish" had been written at the top right, and then covered by the image of the fish head and globe.

a strip of yellow string spirals around the map and hangs off the bottom of the card. a rectangular pattern of blue dots surrounds the syllable "pet" in "petulant. the same pattern, made with the same crayon, begins to the right of the map and continues upward until it surrounds the face of the fish head.

noxic: adj

1. poisonous or harmful
 2. harmful to the mind or morals; corrupting
- [from Latin noxius harmful, from noxa injury]

petulant

late 16th century (in the sense 'immodest'): from French pétulant, from Latin petulant- 'impudent' (related to petere 'aim at, seek'). The current sense (mid 18th century) is influenced by pettish.

adjective: pettish

(of a person or their behavior) childishy bad-tempered and petulant.

"he comes across in his journal entries as spoiled and pettish"

pet: noun

a person treated with special favor, especially in a way that others regard as unfair.

fish out of water

helping people prepare

of course it is trashpo, and thus easily dismissed. but it is also an intricate visual poem. and, if one takes the time to read it, it becomes clear that it was written, composed, with a clear purpose to communicate a specific range of related ideas.

i pick up the next card in the box. a single scrap of map has been torn and affixed with tape along its right edge. the map is of Wizard Island. the paper has been torn to leave the word "ARK" below and to the left of the island. at the bottom left is a thick black arrow pointing towards the right. the nock is shaped like a crown, or a gaping mouth, and points directly to the lower left corner of the map scrap. i lift the map and, over the stamped word "pie" is a piece of a pink post-it note. on it is written, as a list (or, perhaps, a list-poem):

censorship
censorship
censorship
senor Chip
horsewhip

yes, of course, it is trashpo and therefore obviously not worth the time or attention of anyone. of course. in fact, once again, it is vispo, and once we take the time to read it we find that it has been written, composed, with the clear traces of its intentions easy enough to uncover.

there are probably another 50 or so similar cards in the box. all of them can be read.

jim leftwich
07.30.2018